

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUCAR 00595 301011Z
ACTION HEW-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 OES-07 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 /033 W

-----087426 301141Z /17

R 270748Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7641

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TPHY, TBIO, OCON, RO

SUBJ: PROPOSED US/ROMANIAN WORKSHOP ON BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

PRIORITIES: VISIT OF PLANNING TEAM. JANUARY 15-21

REFS: A) 77 STATE 257404, B) 77 BUCHAREST 8713

1. SUMMARY. THREE-MEMBER NIH PLANNING TEAM SPENT INTENSELY BUSY WEEK IN MEETINGS WITH ROMANIAN HEALTH OFFICIALS AND BIOMEDICAL RESEARCHERS AND ALSO VISITING RESEARCH INSTITUTES TO DETERMINE ROMANIAN INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING IN PROPOSED WORKSHOP AND, IF RESEARCH BASE EXISTED, TO SUPPORT POSSIBLE COOPERATIVE PROJECTS WHICH COULD FLOW FROM WORKSHOP. ROMANIAN SIDE AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN WORKSHOP IN FALL OF 1978 AND ALSO AGREED TO FURNISH LIST OF RESEARCH PRIORITIES AND CONCERNED RESEARCHERS IN NEXT FEW WEEKS. NIH TEAM'S CONCLUSION RE CAPACITY OF ROMANIAN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH COMMUNITY TO ENGAGE IN MEANINGFUL, MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RESEARCH WAS GUARDED. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE PERIOD JANUARY 15-21, A THREE-MAN TEAM FROM US NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH (NIH) COMPOSED OF DR. J.E. RALL, DR. H. LEVY AND DR. I. MASNYK VISITED ROMANIA UNDER TERMS OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE OF US AND MINISTRY OF HEALTH OF ROMANIAN SOCIALIST REPUBLIC TO DETERMINE EXTENT OF ROMANIAN INTEREST IN
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PARTICIPATING IN US-ROMANIAN WORKSHOP ON BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH PRIORITIES TO BE HELD IN WASHINGTON IN FALL OF 1978. TEAM ALSO HOPED TO DETERMINE IF ROMANIAN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH COMMUNITY HAS CAPABILITY OF ENGAGING IN MEANINGFUL, MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL JOINT RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT MIGHT DEVELOP FROM PROPOSED WORKSHOP.

3. DURING VISIT, INTRODUCTORY AND CONCLUDING MEETINGS WERE HELD WITH AMBASSADOR, AND DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD WITH DR. ALEXANDRU CALOMFIRESCU, FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH, AND MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF AND ALSO WITH PROFESSOR RADU PAUN, ACTING PRESIDENT OF ACADEMY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, ABOUT PROPOSED WORKSHOP. TEAM ALSO VISITED CANTACUZINO INSTITUTE, VICTOR BABES INSTITUTE, INSTITUTE FOR VIRUSOLOGY, INSTITUTE FOR ENDOCRINOLOGY, INSTITUTE FOR DRUG CONTROL, AND ONCOLOGY INSTITUTE IN BUCHAREST. IN CLUJ, VISITS WERE MADE TO MEDICAL SCHOOL, INSTITUTE OF HYGIENE AND PUBLIC HEALTH AND ONCOLOGICAL INSTITUTE. DISCUSSIONS WERE HELD WITH DIRECTORS AND STAFFS OF THESE INSTITUTIONS.

4. ON BASIS OF DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN US AND ROMANIAN SIDES, IT WAS MUTUALLY AGREED AT CONCLUDING MEETING THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HOLD WORKSHOP IN FALL OF 1978 IN ORDER TO FULLY EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES FOR FULLER COOPERATION IN FIELD OF BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH. AS PRELIMINARY, ROMANIAN SIDE AGREED TO PROVIDE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH WITH LIST OF ITS TEN HIGHEST PRIORITY INTERESTS IN AREA OF BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH, NAMES OF INSTITUTES RESPONSIBLE FOR CARRYING OUT RESEARCH AND NAMES OF EIGHT TO TEN INDIVIDUAL SCIENTISTS WHO COULD PARTICIPATE IN WORKSHOP, WITHIN SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH WOULD THEN RESPOND IN KIND WITH SIMILAR LIST. IT WAS ALSO UNDERSTOOD THAT PRIORITIES SHOULD NOT BE COINED IN GENERAL TERMS, BUT SHOULD BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SPECIFIC WITH RESPECT TO GOALS, METHODOLOGY, ETC.

5. AS AN ADDITIONAL DIMENSION TO US/ROMANIAN COOPERATION IN BIOMEDICAL FIELD, NIH TEAM PROPOSED TO DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH CALOMFIRESCU THAT GOR CONSIDER PARTICIPATING IN FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM OF FOGARTY INTERNATIONAL CENTER. UNDER THIS PROGRAM, YOUNG RESEARCHERS ARE PLACED IN LABORATORIES IN US FOR PERIOD OF ONE TO TWO YEARS. DEPUTY MINISTER INDICATED THAT GOR WOULD BE INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROGRAM AND ASKED THE NIH TEAM TO INITIATE LETTER FROM FOGARTY INTERNATIONAL CENTER FORMALLY INVITING ROMANIAN PARTICIPATION. TEAM AGREED TO UNDERTAKE THIS TASK.

6. AT CONCLUDING MEETING, MEMORANDUM WAS SIGNED BY DEPUTY MINISTER CALOMFIRESCU AND PROFESSOR PAUN, ACTING PRESIDENT OF ROMANIAN ACADEMY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, FOR THE ROMANIAN SIDE, AND THE THREE MEMBERS OF NIH TEAM FOR US SIDE, TAKING NOTE OF UNDERSTANDINGS ARRIVED AT DURING TEAM'S VISIT. MEMORANDUM ALSO NOTED THAT ALL COOPERATIVE ACTIVITIES WOULD BE CARRIED OUT WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF AGREEMENT FOR CULTURAL EXCHANGES AND TECHNO-SCIENTIFIC COLLABORATION SIGNED BETWEEN THE TWO STATES, SENDING SIDE BEING RESPONSIBLE FOR

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL, WHILE RECEIVING SIDE WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR IN-COUNTRY EXPENSES. DR. RALL HAS SIGNED ORIGINAL COPY OF MEMORANDUM.

7. WITH RESPECT TO STATUS OF ROMANIAN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH, TEAM FOUND THAT IT WAS GENERALLY WEAK AND THAT IN SOME INSTANCES, RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES AND CONCLUSIONS WERE NOT BEING SUGGESTED TO THOROUGH SCIENTIFIC CRITIQUE. DESPITE ITS RESERVED CONCLUSION ABOUT CAPABILITY OF ROMANIAN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH, TEAM WAS GUARDEDLY OPTIMISTIC THAT SOME MODE OF COOPERATION COULD BE DEVELOPED FROM WORKSHOP, PROVIDED EXPECTATIONS ARE MODEST AND MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY IS EMPLOYED IN ARRIVING AT MODALITIES FOR COOPERATION. TEAM ALSO CONCLUDED THAT SCIENTIFIC BENEFITS WHICH MIGHT ACCRUE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO US AS RESULT OF COOPERATION WITH ROMANIAN BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH COMMUNITY WOULD PROBABLY BE MODEST. AGGREY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RESEARCH, VISITS, SEMINARS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BUCHAR00595
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780044-0208
Format: TEL
From: BUCHAREST
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780116/aaaaamwn.tel
Line Count: 139
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6fb670df-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION HEW
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 257404, 77 BUCHAREST 8713
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3703758
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSED US/ROMANIAN WORKSHOP ON BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH PRIORITIES: VISIT OF PLANNING TEAM. JANUARY 15-21
TAGS: TPHY, TBIO, OCON, RO, US, NIH, (RALL, J E), (LEVY, H), (MASNYK, I)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6fb670df-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014